

PROPAGATING PLANTS

Propagating plants is an inexpensive and easy way to get new plants from plants you already have in your home or garden.

Leaf cuttings and stem cuttings are two easy way to propagate plants. One of the most amazing things about plants is that every cell can duplicate all the parts of the plant. By taking a cutting of a leaf or stem and creating the right conditions you can create an entirely new plant.

Stem Cutting:

You will need to start with a healthy “mother plant” that has plenty of stems. Taking a few cuttings will not harm the “mother plant”. Geraniums are excellent plants with which to practice stem cuttings.

- Before the first frost, harvest several stems from a healthy plant. Look for a stem with no disease or insects and without flower buds.
- Use a sharp knife to make a 45 degree angle to remove the stem from the plant.
- Cuttings should be three – six inches long and should include the tip of the stem and at least two to three sets of leaves.
- Remove the bottom set of leaves and dip the end of the stem into rooting hormone powder. Hormone powder is available at most garden centers.
- Place the cutting into a small container with a moist soilless potting mix. Keep your new plants warm, moist and in bright light.

It may take a few days or a few months to develop roots. To determine if roots have developed, pull lightly on the plants, you should feel some resistance. Replant your new plant into moist potting soil and keep consistently moist.

Leaf Cutting:

This method of propagating plant is basically the same as stem cuttings. Instead of using stems, leaves are used to create new plants.

- Select a healthy, full grown leaf from a vigorously growing plant.
- Dip the stem of the leaf, where it was attached to the plant, into a rooting hormone.
- After planting in potting mix, water the plant thoroughly to settle the potting mix around the leaf.
- After about 4 – 6 weeks a new root should form and the plant can be moved into a larger container.

